

Application No. 09/909,934

Filed: July 20, 2001

Group Art Unit: 2827

In the Claims

Please rewrite the indicated claims to read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) comprising;

~~a lead frame (10) having a plurality of integrated circuits~~  
areas (11), each of said plurality of integrated circuits areas  
having a die pad (12) and a plurality of leads ~~(13)~~; and

a peripheral pad (14) surrounding said ~~lead frame (10)~~,  
plurality of integrated circuit areas,

~~characterized by~~

said peripheral pad (14) being provided with a plurality of  
stress-relief means (15).

2. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) comprising;

~~a lead frame (10) having a plurality of integrated circuits~~  
areas (11), each of said plurality of integrated circuits areas  
having a die pad (12) and a plurality of leads (13); and

a peripheral pad (14) surrounding said ~~lead frame (10)~~,  
plurality of integrated circuit areas

~~characterized by~~

said peripheral pad (14) being provided with a plurality of  
interlocking means (16).

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3. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 1 ~~further characterized by wherein~~ said plurality of stress-relief means (15) comprises being holes and slots, each hole being a non-elongated opening and each slot being an elongated opening.

4. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 3 ~~further characterized by wherein~~ said holes and slots being are arranged in multiple rows.

5. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 2 ~~further characterized by wherein~~ each of said interlocking means (16) being comprises a plurality of slots, each slot being an elongated opening.

6. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 4 ~~further characterized in that wherein~~ said holes and slots are arranged side by side at equal intervals.

7. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 5 ~~further characterized in that wherein~~ said holes and slots are arranged side by side at equal intervals.